

# Cultural Impressions of Tajikistan

Connectivity U.S. Teacher  
Exchange Feb-March 2005

# The Arts: Music

- Shams/Cultural School Tursunzade/ Nurek



# The Arts: Dancing

- Cultural School Tursunzade/ ILCs/ The People



# Cultural Lesson 1

Culture is much more a natural part of life in Tajikistan than it is in the U.S.





# Cultural Lesson 2

Inclusion seems to be the norm



# Cultural Lesson 3

Family structures/roles are largely patriarchal

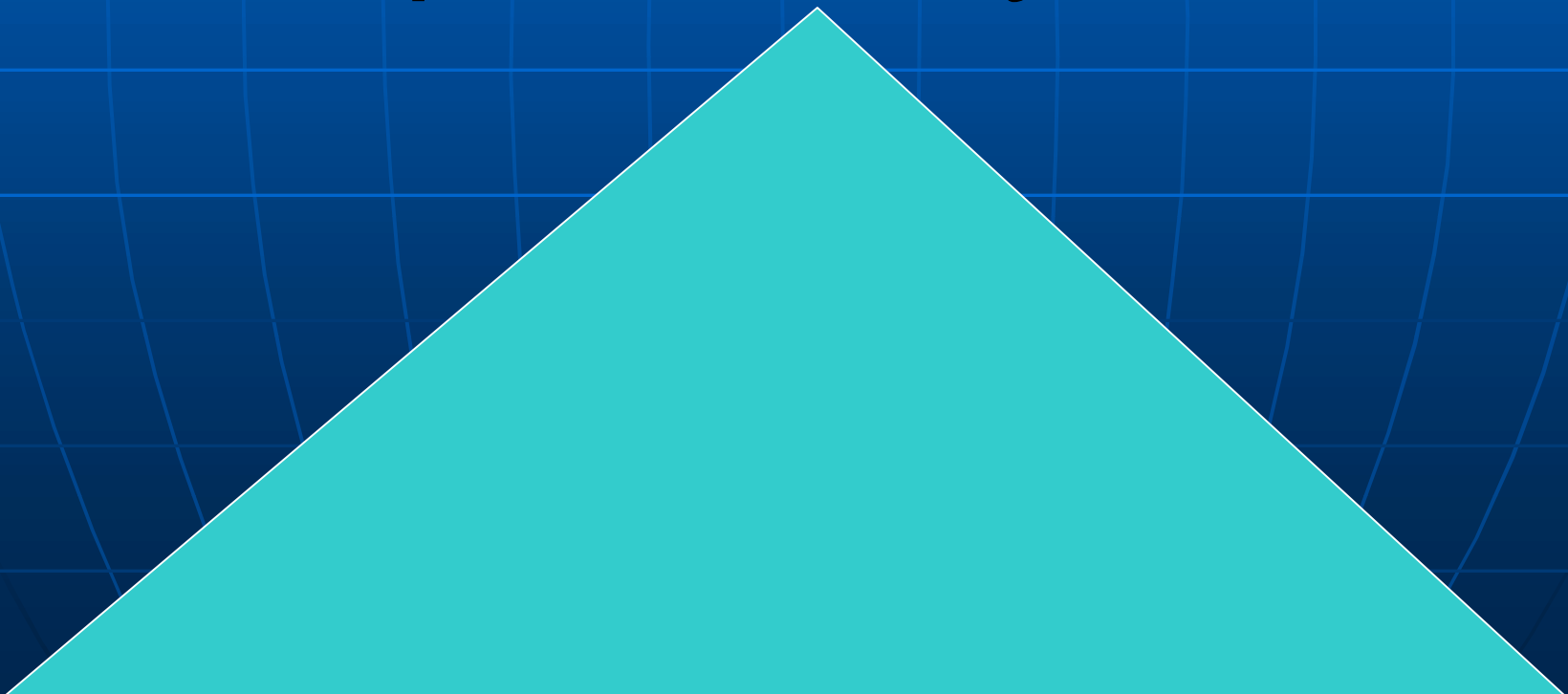


# Cultural Lesson 4

- Meeting of the old and the new



# Breaking Through the Top Down System



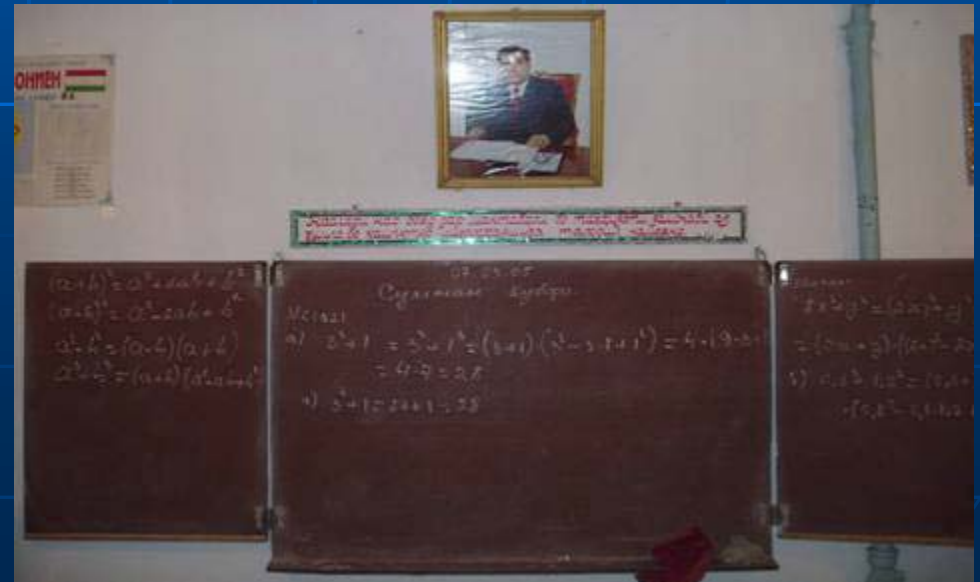


# Problems

- Government structure has changed drastically but underpinnings of society remain the same.
- Change is difficult because of the top down system that exists

# Observations of top down system:

- Remnants of Soviet structure & content in education (soldiers marching)
- Pictures of president on wall serve as constant reminder of higher authority
- Curriculum comes from Ministry of Education and is same in all schools



# ...Observations of top down system

- Students sit in rows facing forward so all ideas bounce off teacher



## ...Observations of top down system

- Very well-defined, hierarchical system with girls at the bottom





# Signs society is ripe for change

- Teachers asking for new methods of teaching
- Staff at ILCs smart, eager to learn & establish relationships with us
- Students eager to communicate with students outside of their community
- Students eager to discuss major social issues



# ...Signs society is ripe for change

- Step by Step program well-received



# ...Signs society is ripe for change

- ILCs source of pride for schools





# ...Signs society is ripe for change

- Parents participating in education & eager to learn & use internet
- Even khukumat involved!





# Internet key to change

- Breaks through top down system and empowers people to take ownership of their own society
- Internet provides models so can see what is possible
- Gives people a new perspective & exposes them to new ideas
- Provides civic education

# Value of Connectivity

# Creates a web of connection beyond the scope of the program

- Ibrahim Rustamov

Joined: 23 Nov 2004

Posts: 8

Location: Isfara

- Posted: Fri Mar 04, 2005 3:47 am    Post subject: Salom

- **Anonymous wrote:**

- WOW! That would have scared the stuffing out of me, too. The visions that would have danced through my mind -probably very similar to the ones you had. I might be able to comfort myself with "Well, I've had a good life for 60 years, so..." but THAT sure wouldn't be available to you.

Looked at some of Ibrahim's photos today. Nice to have them available. Thank you Ibrahim.

Jen's dad

- 

Lot of thanks to you. It was my pleasure to make them available to you.

Ibrahim

---

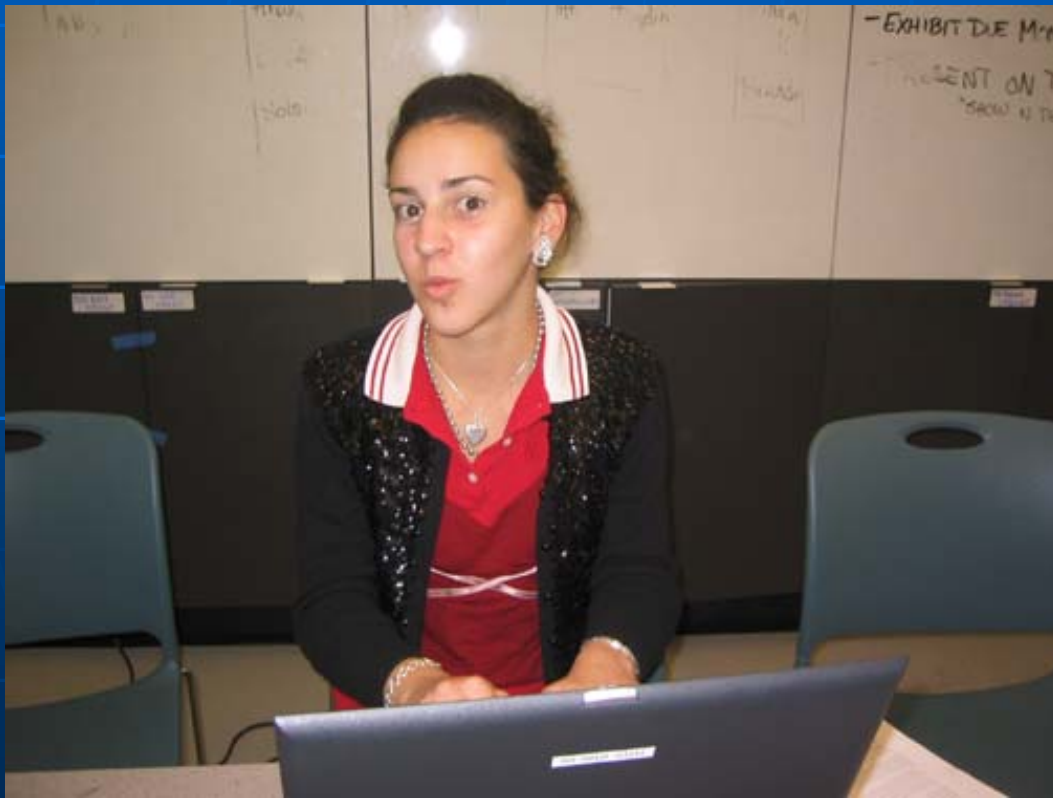
On-Site Educator  
ILC Isfara, Soghd Team

Allows for an informal exchange of ideas – politics, culture





Exposes American students to new ideas & helps burst the bubble of cultural self-centeredness



# Trickle-up effect: Students to parents to community members

- Gets parents and community members interested in the internet & learning
- Motivates parents to support their child's education (even girls)



Engages students  
and encourages  
them to stay in  
school longer –  
girls especially  
important!





# Personal connection & cultural empathy through lasting friendships





# The Future of Connectivity: Problems and Solutions



# The Crossroads of Connectivity in Tajikistan and the Role of the United States

# U. S. Aims

- To promote democracy
- Foster a climate of change and goodwill
- To stabilize governments
- To help secure the future of children

# Connectivity and Meeting These Challenges

- Economically efficient use of American Foreign Aid Investments
- Promotes democracy without alienating people and governments
- Opens doors and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable



If you want to change the future in a  
year plant a crop

Ten years in the future plant an  
orchard

One hundred years in the future  
educate a population



# Democracy and Education

- The current government practices pseudo-democracy
- The next generation believes they will have a voice
- Connectivity and an educated citizenry will allow for democracy to establish itself
- Connectivity promotes the exchange of ideals across borders and cultures

# Future of Connectivity

Three Suggestions for  
Program Expansion

## Teacher to Teacher recruitment in US and more personal relationships between Connectivity Teachers





# Streamlined lesson plans from RI-SOL: Major Themes for School Year Freedom



# Attend Professional Educator Organizations Conferences for recruitment

